

M: 13-45

Pleasant Grove Community Church  
Furdum  
Private

1868

This simply designed, one story frame church was built soon after emancipation by Blacks in the community as their church and their school. Behind it is located the **church** cemetery. The church is one of the oldest Black churches still in use in rural Maryland. Its use as a school reflects the fact that the church was indeed the center of the historical Black community.

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

M: 13-45

Magi #

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Pleasant Grove Community Church

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

North side of Kingstead Road

CITY, TOWN

Purdum

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

8

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Montgomery

**3 CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☒ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

No

**STATUS**☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☒ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Pleasant Grove Community Church

c/o Arthur Randolph  
Telephone #: 253-2432

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Kingstead Road

CITY, TOWN

Purdum

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds

Liber #: T.D. 17

Folio #: 263

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Montgomery County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Rockville

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

M: 13-45

**CONDITION**

☐ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

**CHECK ONE**

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

**CHECK ONE**

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

This small, pretty church stands on the north side of Kingstead Road in Purdum. It is located on a ridgetop and faces toward the south, overlooking the farm land in front of it. To the west of the church and behind it is the cemetery, where members of its congregation have been buried since the founding of the church in 1868. Among the oldest inscribed gravestones is that of Elvira Mason, who was interred here in 1894. See photograph.

The church consists of two principal sections: the original church running longitudinally north-side, and the cinder block "community house" that was attached perpendicularly to the church about 12 to 15 years ago. To the front of the original church has been added a small portico about 3 to 5 years ago. The original church is three bays in depth and one in width. Its design is basically straightforward and without decorative frills. The exterior of the church is sheathed with aluminum siding, which was added about 12 to 15 years ago, and covered the original weatherboards. They had been unpainted. The structure is frame and is made from lumber that was hauled from Frederick, according to the history of the church, a copy of which is enclosed in this survey. The gable roof is covered with tin, and the eaves are boxed with planks. The foundation is of cement now, but was originally of stone. Near the rear of the church ascends a brick stove flue. The windows contain double hung sashes with two over two panes. The beauty of the church lies in its simplicity and setting in the community.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

M.13-45

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

Black History

SPECIFIC DATES

1862

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to the deed T.D. 17/263 and to the written history of the church, this church was founded in 1868. This establishes it as one of the oldest, active churches founded after emancipation in Maryland. In that deed George T. White, one of the prominent white landowners in the Purdum community, gave to the Trustees of the Church one acre of land for the establishment of this church. It was also to be used as a public school for the Black community. Read the written history for more details of its establishment and of the efforts of the community to raise money for its construction.

For descriptions of the life of a family who were members of this church, read the transcription of the interview with the Arnold Hawkins, a copy of which is included with the survey of the Hawkins homestead in Purdum.

Several entries in the History of the Black Public Schools in Montgomery County, 1872-1961 refer to this school. In 1897, it was noted that "Frances Dorsey reopened Purdum Colored School and was furnished books by the Board."<sup>1</sup> Another entry describes the needs of the school:

"As in many other communities in Montgomery County, the black school at Purdum was conducted in a church. The school board promised \$15 per year for a rental fee. In January of 1908, the trustees of Purdum School asked for \$30 for repairs to the building in which school had been held for a number of years and for which the county had paid no rent. The request was granted and this amount would come out of the rent money due." (p. 10)

After 1908, the school was closed for a period of five years. Coming the year after the request for the \$30 for repairs and rent, this closing was probably a retaliatory response to that request. This illustrates the problems with educational support that Black communities have had in the county for over a century.

The principal significance of this church and school is that it is the center of the Black community and is a legacy of their faith in religion and education.

## FOOTNOTES:

<sup>1</sup>. History of the Black Public Schools of Montgomery County, Maryland, 1872-1961, Nina Clarke and Lillian B. Brown, (Vantage Press, New York, 1978) p.10.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

2. Ibid., p. 21.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Land Records, Montgomery County Courthouse, Rockville, Md.

Oral Interviews with Arthur Randolph, and Arnold Hawkins, Purdum, Md., January, 1979. Not taped.

Clarke, Nina, & Brown, Lilliam B., History of the Black Public Schools of Montgomery Co., Md., 1872-1961,

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

Vantage Press, New York, 1978.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION****LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

George W. McDaniel, Surveyor; Karen Sewell, Research Assistant

ORGANIZATION

Sugarloaf Regional Trails

DATE

January 1979

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Box 87

TELEPHONE

926-4510

CITY OR TOWN

Dickerson

STATE

Maryland 20753

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: ~~Maryland Historical Trust~~  
~~The Shaw House, 21 State Circle~~  
~~Annapolis, Maryland 21401~~  
~~(301) 267-1438~~

SUGARLOAF REGIONAL TRAILS  
 Box 87, Dickerson  
 Dickerson, Md. 20753  
 (301) 451-0001

## THE HISTORY OF PLEASANT GROVE COMMUNITY CHURCH

In the year 1868, George T. White and his wife gave an acre of ground to the people of this community for the use of a public school and church. The people of the community held picinics to raise funds. They were also given help by a donation from the Bureau of Engraver. After the funds had been raised, Mr. John Burdette took a team of horses and hauled the lumber free of charge from Frederick. In 1869 on September 12th, the building was ready for use. The building was for both a school and church until the year 1908. The school was then closed for a period of five years, but the church was still in use. The first Trustees were Jeremiah Mason, Benjamin A. Davis, and Howard W. Gray. This information was received from Miss Martha Brown Foreman, who was the niece of Jeremiah Mason and who also lived in the community. Reverend Bradley Johnson was the pastor of the charge as well as the school teacher from 1912 to 1917. In 1917, Rev. Johnson was succeeded by Rev. J. M. Rome. In the year of 1920, the Mt. Airy charge was divided. Friendship and Pleasant Grove was then called the Damascus charge. Their first pastor was Reverend Benjamin Brown, who served two years. He was succeeded by Rev. James A. Jackson, who also served two years. His successor was Rev. James E. Carter. Later Rev. Carter was followed by Rev. P. C. Butler. In 1929, the charge was merged again by the Conference. It was then called the Mt. Airy and Damascus charge. Reverend J. E. Carter was the pastor of the Mt. Airy and Damascus charge. Later he was succeeded by Rev. James M. Barnes. To succeed Rev. Barnes was Rev. Thomas Hoosey Reed, who was followed by Rev. R. H. Carpenter. Next pastor to the church was Rev. Sherman Mason and later was Rev. Aaron Johnson. Rev. Johnson was followed by Rev. James H. Smith. At the present we are very fortunate to have as our pastor now Reverend Alonzo Graham.

Mrs. Elsie Carter says she has heard her father, Warner Wims, say that Montgomery Chapel Church at Hyattstown and White School House, now the Pleasant Grove Community Church at Burnt Hill, was the first two colored churches they had to go to after slavery time. Before they could attend the white churches if a gallery was sit up or else they had to sit in the back of the white church.

The first families in this community were:

Davis'	Grays
Browns	Bowies
Masons	Snowdens
Lyles	Hawkins'
Smiths	Andersons
Fredericks	Browns

The present families residing in the community are:

Randolphs	Pryors
Nickens	Williams
Hebrons	Hackeys
Dorseys	





Pleasant Grove Church

South View: facade

13-45  
~~M-77 10-72~~

Purdum, Md.

11/78 SUM



**Pleasant Grove Methodist Church**

1. Copy of printed  
card - "Pleasant  
Grove Methodist  
Church"

2.

3. Photographer:

JOSEPH J. DAVIS  
4501 WOODFIELD ROAD  
KENSINGTON, MD 20795

4. Date: 1979 FEB - 4

5. Negative of copy  
resides with photographer.

6.

7. File No. 790932A

Copy of printed card - "Pleasant  
Grove Methodist Church"

Photographer: Joseph J. Davis  
Date : Feb. 4, 1979

Original: Joe Hawkins, Purdum

M - ~~13-10-12~~

13-45

790932A



Pleasant Grove Church

East Elevation

M-~~13-10-12~~ 13-45

Purdum, Md.

11/78 GWM



Pleasant Grove Church & Cemetery

~~North~~ View  
South

M-~~13-10-12~~ 13-45

Purdum, Md.

11/78 Gum



Holy Bible

ELVIRA MASON  
Born March 20 1823  
Died Jan. 25 1894  
in the 71st year  
of her age

*There is glory for the virtuous  
when they die*



Pleasant Grove Church Cemetery

13-45

~~m-13-10-12~~

Purdum, Md.

11/78

GWM